

Division.	A		B		C												Causes unknown.	Total (A, B and C).						
	Fire caused by accident or through carelessness in burning fire-lines.		Fire entering the Forest by crossing exterior fire-traces.		FIRE BEGINNING THE INSIDE OF RESERVE OF FIRE-TRACED AREA.																			
					Owing to carelessness or accident.						By intentional firing.													
By workmen employed in the Forest.		By villagers, travellers, &c., passing through the Forest.		By Railway engines.		By lightning or by fire-balloons.		In order to obtain new grass.		In order to turn out game or to reduce cover.		Maliciously fired.		Total.										
Number of fires.	Area burnt in acres.	Number of fires.	Area burnt in acres.	Number of fires.	Area burnt in acres.	Number of fires.	Area burnt in acres.	Number of fires.	Area burnt in acres.	Number of fires.	Area burnt in acres.	Number of fires.	Area burnt in acres.	Number of fires.	Area burnt in acres.									
North Tháná ...	3	41	3	430	...	2	60	...	...	...	...	8	824	...	8	824	45	4,390	61	5,745		
Central Tháná...	4	167	1	160	3	172	1	50	1	25	...	...	3	167	2	74	5	241	152	11,883	167	12,698
South Tháná ...	3	78	81	3,989	...	22	8	84	...	...	...	...	2	361	...	5	528	163	20,943	...	...	
Surat ...	...	...	...	50	...	23	4,103	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	24	4,153	...	...	
Panch Maháls ...	6	174	37	11,419	1	7	65	8,890	7	1,912	...	...	...	...	12	560	12	560	62	7,679	190	30,641
Total ...	16	460	73	16,048	7	201	99	13,187	8	1,937	13	1,352	16	801	29	2,153	373	40,194	605	74,180

(3).—*Regulation of Grazing and Protection from Cattle.*

47. The following statement gives details of cattle impounded during the year under report :—

Number.	Division.	FROM OPEN FORESTS.		FROM CLOSED FORESTS.		TOTAL.	
		1895-96.	1896-97.	1895-96.	1896-97.	1895-96.	1896-97.
1	North Tháná ...	690	391	1,478	1,089	2,168	1,480
2	South Tháná ...	...	...	1,242	1,324	1,242	1,324
3	Central Tháná ...	51	37	1,517	2,076	1,568	2,113
4	Surat ...	839	757	628	718	1,467	1,475
5	Panch Maháls ...	1,330	1,805	771	2,328	2,101	4,133
	Total ...	2,910	2,990	5,636	7,535	8,546	10,525

48. The grazing rules, sanctioned under Government Resolution No. 4596, dated 7th July 1891, were modified a little in respect of the Panch Maháls Division under Government Resolution No. 1663, dated 2nd March 1897, under which Rule XVII has been cancelled. It was brought to the notice of Government that this rule could not be worked in the Panch Maháls in the circumstances in which the cattle of the district are herded.

In the Surat Division the grazing rules were in force, whereas in Tháná, except Bassein, Bhiwandi, Kalyán, they have not yet been introduced.

Fencing.

49. There were no fencing operations undertaken in the Tháná District, except that a coupe was enclosed with "Euphorbia" at a cost of Rs. 7-4-0 as an experiment in the South Tháná Division. In Surat the reserve forest of Goema was fenced in with wire at a cost of Rs. 207-12-0. In the Panch Maháls no fencing was done.

Civil Suits.

50. There have been two civil suits pending since last year. One is Raghunath Vithal Desai v. The Secretary of State for India, and the other Govind Atmáramshet of Bassein v. the Range Forest Officer, Bassein, and others. The former has sued for the recovery of Rs. 402-10-0 deducted from his deposit on account of breach of contract agreement, and the latter for the recovery of damages amounting to Rs. 4,999 suffered by the complainant on account of being criminally prosecuted for theft of forest produce.

Criminal Cases.

51. In North Tháná a forest guard was prosecuted for receiving bribes, convicted and sentenced to one month's imprisonment with hard labour.

In the South Tháná Division a writer guard was prosecuted for a similar offence, but the case was not decided before the end of the year.

In the Panch Maháls two guards were convicted and fined Rs. 20 each for assaulting their superior officer, the round guard.

A guard was also prosecuted, convicted and sentenced to three months' imprisonment for receiving a bribe from a Bhil in the Dohad Range.

Five persons were prosecuted for obstructing forest officers in connection with the building of a forest post at Rena in the Godhra Range, and two of them were mulcted in a fine of Rs. 50 each, one Rs. 30, and the fourth Rs. 20. The fifth was discharged.

*(c).—IMPROVEMENT OF FOREST GROWTH.**(1).—Natural Reproduction.*

52. Generally speaking natural reproduction by seed was not satisfactory during the year for want of rain at the close of the monsoon. However it is reported that in certain localities where the ground was moist, reproduction was fairly good. The reproduction by coppice shoots in coupes was also fairly good. It is observed that where the contractors started felling operations in coupes early in September and October, the teak shoots threw out very strong coppice shoots, but where the fellings were delayed until after December the coppice shoots were found to be poor and in many cases no shoots appeared at all.

(2).—Artificial Reproduction.

53. Transplanting of plants and broad-casting of seed were done by subordinates as usual, but the results were very poor owing to failure of rain.

54. The nursery started last year at Godhra in the Panch Maháls Division has been in full working order, several thousands of plants of teak and other species have been raised and are being prepared for transplantation. The fruit-tree plants, seed for which was purchased with the funds given by the Collector from local funds, are reported to be in a flourishing condition. This nursery has been provided with a Máli to look after the sowing operations, and it has been fitted up with watering apparatus.

The nursery at Vejalpur in the Surat Division is also doing well. Thousands of transplants raised in this nursery have been planted out in several reserves in the Bulsár Range.

(3).—Early Thinnings.

55. No such operations are carried out in this Circle and they are not necessary.

(4).—Other operations for the improvement of the growing stock.

56. In all the Divisions creeper-cutting was undertaken to improve the growing stock. In the Tháná Division it was done both by the guards and paid labour. The cost thus incurred in the three Tháná Divisions amounted to Rs. 633. With this creeper-cutting, a curious fact has been reported by the Divisional Forest Officer, South Tháná. He says that in the Murbád and Sháhápúr Ranges the wild tribes assisted materially in the destruction of creepers by digging up the roots for food. This particular climber is botanically termed *Dioscorca bulbifera*.

(5).—Experiments.

57. There were no experiments worth recording.

(d).—EXTRACTION AND TRANSPORT OF MAJOR FOREST PRODUCE BY LAND OR WATER.

58. There is nothing special to record under this head.